



NEWS FROM
Jack Scott

21st SENATE DISTRICT



For Immediate Release
April 24, 2001

Contact: Gail Evans
916-445-5976

BILL BY SENATORS JIM BRULTE AND JACK SCOTT TO HELP KEEP GUNS OUT OF THE HANDS OF CRIMINALS APPROVED BY SENATE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

SB 950 requires The Department of Justice to identify handgun owners who are prohibited from owning firearms.

The Senate Public Safety Committee today unanimously approved SB 950 (by a vote of 4 to 0) to plug a legal loophole which prevents law enforcement from arresting and prosecuting criminals who own guns. SB 950, a bipartisan bill authored jointly by Senators Jim Brulte (R – Riverside), and Jack Scott (D – Pasadena), is designed to correct the problem. The bill would allow the Department of Justice (DOJ) to cross-reference its records showing who is prohibited from owning firearms with those showing who has purchased handguns.

Under current law, a person must pass a background check, and wait ten days before legally purchasing a handgun. DOJ retains records about the purchase. If that same person is later convicted of a felony, or a misdemeanor involving violence or a weapon, he or she becomes ineligible to own or possess firearms for at least ten years. Although DOJ also retains records about those criminal convictions, it cannot cross-reference the information with records about firearms purchases under current law.

"SB 950 is important legislation which will help keep guns out of the hands of criminals," said Senator Scott. "Under current law, there is no mechanism to determine whether a person who has purchased a firearm subsequently becomes ineligible to own that firearm because of a criminal conviction," continued Senator Scott. "SB 950 will bridge the existing information gap between firearms dealers and law enforcement."

SB 950 received bipartisan support, including both supporters of gun control and gun owners groups. Representatives from both Handgun Control and the California Rifle and Pistol Association found rare common ground to speak in favor of the bill. "Everyone agrees that we need to keep guns out of the hands of criminals. SB 950 allows us to do just that," said Senator Scott.

#####

